

WE are informed by the Agents (Messrs. D. Sassoon, Sons & Co.) that the steamer *Yagan*, from Calcutta, left Singapore yesterday for this port.

At the Magistracy to-day three men were sent to gaol for three months each for stealing, or receiving when stolen, six silk handkerchiefs belonging to M. de Champeaux.

"I don't meet you at Miss Swetto's any more."
"No; she and I have had a difference of opinion."
"Nothing serious, I hope?"
"Oh, no; only I thought I was the man she ought to marry and she thought I wasn't."

The *Siang Poo Press* states that Mr. Beckett, of H.B.M. Consulate General in Bangkok, will leave for the Mekong about the middle of December. His mission is of a political character, and he will travel via Korat, Ochoon and Bassac. On his return to Bangkok, he will go on leave for a year.

"I AM all in favor of cheap law and on a ready money basis," said one of 'the brigade' the other night when discussing the gross extortions practised on the public unfortunates who happen to get involved in litigation in Hongkong as elsewhere. "Cheap justice would be better," quietly "chipped in" a member of the Fourth Estate, who knew what he was talking about.

A BLUSH is defined by Dr. T. C. Minor as "a temporary erythema and calorific effulgence of the physiognomy, attologised by the perceptiveness of the censorium when in a predicament of unequillibrium from a sense of shame, anger, or other cause, eventuating in a paroxysm of the vasomotor capillaries, whereby, being divested of their elasticity, they are suffused with radiant, aerated, compound nutritive circulating liquid, emanating from an infatuated precordia."

The *Siang Poo Press* states that Mr. Götze (who was proprietor of the *Gazette*) has been summoned to appear at the German Consular Court, charged on six separate counts with having transgressed German law in connection with the article in the late *Siang Mercantile Gazette* on the Korat Railway Tender Scandal. We understand, however, that he had relinquished the proprietorship, nominally at a low rate, at the time when the article was published.

HANOI has now its gambling trouble, which bids fair to become as serious a question as that of Hongkong. The *Courrier* calls the attention of the Government to the great evil resulting from the opening of two native casinos (under licence) for two games—*to-lun* and *blanc-rouge*, which we believe correspond with what are known in Hongkong as the *Shanghai* and *Paris* games. The latter is alleged, among others, to be demoralising the community. "On a phénix avec joie et plaisir, on en voit aussi chagrins. Pourqu'il parqu'on a perdu tout sa fortune." The *Courrier* calls for an investigation of the system, to prove the need for its suppression.

THUR the *Shanghai*—The soldiers of the three garrison camps under the commanding General Wu of Tientsin, five rifle brigades and two camps of the Vice-regal bodyguards under General Ho, held a grand review recently. The garrison soldiers excelled in riding and arrow shooting on horseback and on foot; the riflemen and bodyguards showed great skill in handling firearms and working big guns. The drill was superb and the manoeuvres reflect great credit on the officers. After the parade was over, the agents of Messrs. Magniac & Co. requested and obtained permission to exhibit their latest rifle machine guns and new magazine rifle. The iron target was placed at a distance of 200 yards and was penetrated through and through by the machine guns, which discharged over 200 shots every minute. There were present the Director of the Peking Ordnance Department Chang Taoai, Generals Wu and Ho, the Commissioner of Customs, and the foreign Consuls.

THE Lorne Athletic Club and band of the 9th Regiment give their farewell performance in the City Hall to-night, for the benefit of the Garrison Female Hospital and Sailors and Sailors Institute. We hardly need add any word of commendation, for the attendance of the public is altogether assured. It is a pity the Hall is no bigger.

PROGRAMME.
PART I.
1.—Overture. "The Merry Men of Roncevaux."
2.—Cornet Solo. "The Song of England."
3.—Band Solo. "The Song of England."
4.—Band Solo. "The Song of England."
5.—Musical Drill. "The Song of England."
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INTRODUCTION
Summary of War Troops Assembly. The Embarkation. Board Disembarkation. The Camp at Night. The Camp at Day. The Camp at Night. The Camp

The British bark *Mary Stuart*, 47 tons register, of Aberdeen, which arrived from Whampoa on the 25th instant, has been sold to Messrs. Passaged & Co., a German firm of Amoy. The *Mary Stuart* will be surveyed in the usual way on Monday next prior to changing her flag. The new master is a German, Capt. Aggers.

Mrs. Greathread:—"What kept you so late at that meeting?"

Mr. Greathread:—"I had to draw up a long application for publication, complimenting Mr. Bulbhead's great efficiency as a member of the Board, and expressing our heartfelt regret at losing his invaluable aid and counsel."

"Of all things! Why, you and the rest have been fighting for three months to get him out of the Board!"

"Yes; but to-night he resigned voluntarily."

DURING the stay of H. M. S. *Imperieuse* in Yokohama two very interesting bowling matches were played at the Bowling Club, with teams representing the Club and the Navy, both games, for the first time in the history of the Club, being won by the Navy team. On both occasions fairly good scores were made. The *Imperieuse* Comdary of Bogle Minirels gave a very successful performance, on board to which the foreign residents were invited. On a previous occasion the same company gave a similar performance, but the most interesting was that of the 1st and 2nd Lieutenants, who were fully maintained on their second appearance. H. M. S. *Severn* arrived the day previous to the performance, for docking, and a number of her officers were present. The *Imperieuse* will stay in Hongkong until next Spring, when she will again, it is expected, go north.

THERE was a terrific rumour at the headquarters of the Shanghai Mercantile Marine Officers' Association a night or two ago. "We learn privately that it was a case of Briton v. Tonton. Billiard cues, billiard balls, glasses, bottles and walking-sticks were freely used, and for about twenty minutes a desperate encounter was carried on. Finally, after several heads had been broken floods, of claret spilled, and numerous blinkers had been closed, there was a dead silence—the bar-boy had "doused the glim." Other lights were soon "fixed up" however, and the doughty British tars were ready to resume duty. But they had nothing to do, for the German and the foreigner had retreated under cover of the darkness. Result: All but 8 Scandinavians have given up the Shanghai Association, much to the delight of the Englishmen. We shall await further particulars of the "scrap" with interest.

JOHN PITMAN.

When at the Protestant Cemetery, Happy Valley, on the afternoon of the 23rd November, the mortal remains of John Pitman were consigned to eternal rest in the presence of a large and distinguished assembly. It was in the eventful life of one of the most prominent figures in the history of the Far East during the last quarter of a century. John Pitman was no ordinary man; he was an Englishman of Englishmen, with an individuality all his own. In addition to those hereditary characteristics of his race, which have accomplished so much for human progress, The bosom friend of "Chinese" Gordon, he possessed in many respects the great soldier and philosopher who was truly called the "Great Teacher of the East." Kharatoom—the same dauntless courage supported by energies that never gave out, the same erratic genius, the same whole-souled sympathy for the distressed and unfortunate, the same big, generous heart. He was also the intimate friend of Sir John Pope Hennessy, for whose character and career he always expressed the most profound admiration, and the news of whose sudden and unexpected death only a few short weeks ago fell like a thunderbolt and saddened the last days of his life.

Mr. Pitman, some of twenty years ago that he was in Hongkong and Canton. Eventually settling down in Japan, Mr. Pitman on more than one occasion had amassed a handsome fortune; but the spirit of unrest was strong in him, he never could have to many lions in the fire, he trusted people wholly, and as is customary he reaped a bitter harvest. Five years ago he sold an immense estate in Hampshire, and returned to Japan, where he was as well known at Tientsin and Peking as he was at Yokohama and Yodo; he was as much a moving spirit in Shanghai as he was in Hongkong and Canton. Eventually settling down in Japan, Mr. Pitman on more than one occasion had amassed a handsome fortune; but the spirit of unrest was strong in him, he never could have to many lions in the fire, he trusted people wholly, and as is customary he reaped a bitter harvest. 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Privy Council was abandoned after the
also Government had spent some \$7,000 in
in military costs.

About the end of 1891 Captain Pitman took a
little paddle-steamer called the *Ruri-maru* to
aiphong, and under charter to the French
Government rendered valuable service in
conveying troops, stores, etc., up the Red
River to Haanoi and other places, and
was the winner of the Tonquinese and
the Black Flags. Shortly after the outbreak
of the "war of reprisals" between France and
China, the ubiquitous Pitman was found in
anton occupying the position of right-hand man
and confidential adviser to the Viceroy. Chang
Ha-sheng, and in various capacities he did
valuable work for the Cantonese authorities.
With the arrival of Chang Chih-tung, as High
Commissioner, and the death of the aged
Viceroy, the "Grand Secretary Hsin-tai" found
his occupation gone, and we believe we are
correct in stating that up to this day the services
rendered the Viceroy Chang have never been
remunerated. In business matters the most care-
less man in the world, he had made no specific
arrangements with the Viceroy, but suggested
that everything could be settled at the termina-
tion of the war; and when a king arrived who
was not Joseph, Chang Chih-tung to wit, the
nameless foreigner's claims were ignored and he
was left out in the cold. So like His Excellency
Chang Chih-tung.

For several years past Mr. Pitman has been
devising with his usual unflagging energy, devising
impossible schemes and wasting brains, time
and money in trying to carry them out. Unfortu-
nately financial transactions and worried in many
different ways he lately fell somewhat from his high
estate and formed associations that were neither
keeping with his past career nor in accordance
with his own tastes. A few months ago his
poor health commenced to fail, and it was
quickly apparent to those who knew him best
that the end was not far off. He was in the
Hospital on the evening of Sunday the 2nd and November
aged 51 years.

In social life Mr. Pitman was the most
charming of men. He had been almost every-
where, he knew something intelligently about
almost everything on the face of the earth or on
the bosom of the sea, his reading had been wide
and extensive, he was a most amusing *raison-
neur*, the most entertaining of guests and the
most hospitable of hosts, the soul of courtesy to
women and the manifest of men. He had his
faults and they were not few, but his virtues far
outbalanced them. He tempered and easily
led, he made many mistakes, and none greater
than in carrying out the belief that true
generosity consisted in obeying every impulse
of humanity and in following blind passion as
a guide.

**B. AND S. BONUS STOPPED
AGAIN.**

The Chinese steward of the Taihook steamer
Woojung was detected on Thursday in an
attempt to smuggle 1,000 rounds of Winchester
ammunition on board the vessel, in boxes of fifty.
It is stated that he had begged them at \$15 a
box and intended to smuggle them into Shanghai
or Chefoo, where they would fetch \$20 a box.
There was a rigorous search for the rifles which
would naturally be required for the use of the
cartridges, but none could be found. Mr. Wise
this morning imposed the maximum penalty of
\$3,000, or six months. Prisoner elected to go to
gaol.

This seems to be on a par with the Wittshire
case, except in one important particular—that
the chief officer found the bullets at this time.
Still it may be said that the "Wittshire" case
is not satisfactory. It is expected that the
bonus will be stopped.

CORRESPONDENCE.

(We do not necessarily endorse the opinions expressed by
Correspondents in this column.)

LOCAL LEGISLATION.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HONGKONG TIMES."—
SIR,—I hail with esteem it a favour if you will
grant me space in your columns for the publica-
tion of the candid opinions of a great many
colonists, both European and Chinese, relative to
the degrading farce which is constantly enacted
in the local Council Chamber.

The peoples' representatives are outnumbered
by the official automatons who figure as
legislators by virtue of their positions here as
heads of departments. These latter gently do
not intend to say anything to the Government
and they dare not do otherwise. When the
unofficial members vote against this, that, or
the other outlay of public funds the
"dummies" who exist upon the money
wrung from Hongkong taxpayers, join together
and defeat the opposition when it comes to the
vote. This sort of thing, a degrading farce, goes
on from week to week and year to year. It has
gone on for fifty years. That is to say, the
representatives of the people have been gulled
by the lie in high places ever since that time.
Still I fairly believe they have a real interest
in the management of public affairs. They say
that they are doing their duty to their con-
stituents by toddling up to the Council Chamber
every week, talking themselves hoarse and
struggling against impossible odds; but it is
not so. All they accomplish amounts to
nothing, and now that Mr. Whitehead has
plucked up sufficient courage to propose what is
to all intents and purposes a vote of censure,
they are to long for the day when members will
cease to attend the Council, will cease to allow
themselves to become pawns in a degrading
farce the next time the Government awakes
them with their official majority of the tax-
payers' own paid servants.

Seeing that the time of the unofficial members
is much more valuable to them than it is to
the officials, they type in seeing further
that all the time spent by them in the Council is
positively wasted, and that they always come
out empty-headed, beaten, and confused.
Some have been told that they are to be
on a par with their notoriously shallow
capacity, it is a wonder that such un-
constitutional proceedings have been tolerated so
long.

The public, the taxpayers of Hongkong, are
in reality no voice in the matter of the collection
and disbursement of public moneys; they
representatives can do nothing by going to
the Council Chamber, and never will accomplish
anything so long as they continue to be
gulled, practically, as they are, by the
officials, and some of the best of them is there
because he "fancies himself" as a Council
member. And they are all ignorant, and would be better
out of the Council than in it, as they are as
business and public interests are concerned.

The fact is that Messrs. Ryrie, Whitehead,
Kewick, Chater and Ho Kai would do well to
themselves and the interests they are suppo-
sed to represent, were they to resign their seats
immediately to the Legislative Council, and
be materially rewarded for the job they
do. Until some such bold policy is adopted, the
unofficial members everything will go on from
bad to worse until, at last, they find themselves

THE ACCIDENT TO THE "LIGHTNING."

There has been so much talk in nautical circles about the "Apar" steamer *Lightning's* mishap at the Sulphur Channel at the beginning of November, and so many silly stories circulated about unknown rocks, inefficient surveys, &c., that we have been led to think it is worth while to investigate the circumstances connected with the accident, which is a very simple matter after all.

On the evening of November 22, at 7.40 o'clock, the *Lightning*, Capt. C. B. Pallett, from Calcutta and Singapore, was entering Hongkong harbour. The night was dark and cloudy, a fresh breeze blowing from the E.; with the tide at three-quarter flood and many strong vessels. Having sighted the front to avoid several junks, which were crossing the channel, the steamer was rather to the north side of the channel. After passing Green Island light the ship was suddenly observed to stop ahead, and a helm was at once starboarded to avoid risk of a collision. The strong tide, catching the steamer on her starboard bow, caused her to take a sudden sheer towards Green Island. The helm was immediately steadied, and at the same moment a shock was felt as if the vessel had struck some hard substance. An order to starboard was promptly given, so as to sheer her stern further out into the channel, when the helm was again steadied. The *Lightning* did not stop, but she shortly began to refuse to go ahead, and it was clear that time was being going about at a quarter speed, and slowing down preparatory to anchoring in the outer roads. After the accident the vessel proceeded and anchored outside the shipping.

The wells and ballast tanks fore and aft were sounded, but no water was found and the ship was apparently uninjured; but next morning it was discovered that she was making water in the double bottom, underneath the boiler and machinery spaces. On proceeding to dry dock at Kowloon for examination it was found that the port side of the steamer was uninjured, but that seventeen plates on the starboard side were missing and the hull was cracked running in a straight fore and aft line. The other part of the hull had touched nothing and was uninjured.

Now this is a very feasible and straightforward account of a very unfortunate accident that might have been attended with serious results. Captain Pallett's theory is that the *Lightning* came into contact with a small pinnacle rock, which he says, is not marked on the chart. From the nature of the injuries sustained by the steamer, there can be no doubt that she did strike a rock as described above, but although this obstruction may not be definitely marked on the chart, it is quite certain that it is outside the limits of safe navigation, which are shown on the chart by a dotted line. The only reasonable explanation of the occurrence that suggests itself to us, and to several experienced and practical navigators who are thoroughly acquainted with Sulphur Channel and with whom we have discussed the matter, is that, in trying to avoid the junks by starboarding, the steamer, owing most probably to the force of the strong tide running, was unlucky enough to get out of the regular channel and too close to Green Island, where there are probably a goodly number of pinnacle rocks. It is a pity that this happened in a narrow channel, and in a particularly narrow fairway, no-blame can attach to anybody. The *Lightning* appears to have been carefully handled, and Captain Pallett's well-earned reputation as a skilled and careful ship-master is certainly not in any way lessened by a combination of circumstances which could neither be foreseen nor avoided. The erratic manœuvring of Chinese junks is the bane of ship-masters on the China coast, and we know of no place where so dangerous sailing forms, their reckless handling, can be more pronounced than in Sulphur Channel. It is a moot point whether, taking everything into consideration, it would not generally be safer to chance a collision than to run the risk of piling a valuable steamer on the rocks in trying to avoid these dangerous customers in narrow waters.

JOTTINGS ON SIAM.

V.—THE PRESS OF SIAM.

That the King of Siam and many of his Ministers have been a very bad nation for the press and value of the Press there can be but little doubt in the minds of those Europeans who have visited "the last independent kingdom" and studied its social and political affairs. It may be to the ultimate advantage of the Kingdom—a state in which Englishmen have every reason to be interested owing to the possibility of British blood and money being expended there to no insignificant extent owing to the impotence of the Government, their bungling over the Anglo-Siam Franchise and some other questions, of their failure to take time by the forelock in the direction of Annam and Cambodia if we set forth a few facts relative to the universally acknowledged sphere of action of the press of Christendom, bringing with a word or two in season.

Magna est Veritas at prevalabit is a motto verified as regards the Press, and the truth may be well stated now as at any other time. The fact is, that the very first, the chief and most imperative duty of the press is to open the eyes of the masses and enable the people to see beyond the actual sphere and the social status in which they are placed, and to gradually form that consensus of public opinion, disinterested and just, which is so fatal to the apostles of bribery, jobbery and corruption in governing bodies. As regards Oriental Governments the power of the press, if skillfully manipulated, must be felt, and it must bring enormous benefits to the masses. It has been so, and is still so in the Great West and it is destined to be so in the Far East.

As regards the British and American press it has been its proud boast for many years past that it is fearless and independent for the change of duty to the masses; that where corruption, injustice or oppression has reared its head, the independent, unbiassed press has done its duty well and nobly; never resting until the champions of botchery, infamy and tyranny have been ferreted out of their lairs, stripped of their weapons and power of torture, and sentenced, exposed to their true colours and branded as contained, a contemptible, a degraded mass of ignominious humanity. In the prophetic words of the Bible, "The voice of the voice of God" should be either a reproof of individuals or corporations as long as vice rears her head and power intended for the masses is cherished and monopolized by a few individuals the free press should ever adopt the rôle of a fearless exponent of public opinion and not rest until those responsible for injustice are deservedly punished.

The position of an Editor in the East, and especially in Siam, where two English papers are published—the *Bangkok Times* and the

